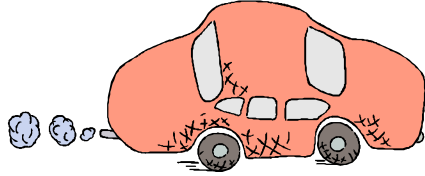


FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT DIVISION



TRAVEL TIDBITS

“ONE APHIS - - SHARING INFORMATION”

December 2003

This is the eighth issuance of “Travel Tidbits” for 2003. Travel Tidbits are designed to provide Agency personnel with the current policies and procedures relating to federal travel and transportation practices. Travel Tidbits will be emailed to program travel contacts on a monthly basis and they are also available online at www.aphis.usda.gov/mrpbs/travel.html.

The information provided is obtained from General Services Administration’s (GSA) Board of Contract Appeals (BCA) Decisions, Comptroller General (CG) Decisions, Departmental and Agency policy, as well as, the Federal Travel Regulations (FTR). This publication is to be used as a tool to assist with the interpretation of travel regulations and to provide instructions of travel processes.

ACCEPTANCE OF FUNDS FROM OUTSIDE SOURCES FOR THE PAYMENT OF TRAVEL

This issue addresses the payment of travel expenses from outside sources. The definitions listed below are provided to further clarify the policy.

Interested Party – any person, firm, corporation, other entity, or an individual acting in behalf thereof, which has or is seeking to engage in procurement activities or other contractual, business, or financial relations with the Department (e.g., pre-clearance); conducts operations or activities that are regulated by the Department; or has interests that may be affected substantially by the performance or nonperformance of the official duties of the employee concerned.

Payment means a monetary payment from a non-federal source to a Federal agency for travel, subsistence or related expenses by check or other monetary instrument payable to the Federal agency (i.e., electronic fund transfer (EFT), money order, charge card, etc.) or payment in kind.

Payment in kind means transportation, food, lodging, or other travel-related services provided by a non-Federal source instead of monetary payments to the Federal Agency

for these services. Payment in kind also includes waiver of any fees that a non-Federal source normally collects from meeting attendees (e.g., registration fees).

You may **not** accept travel or expenses for travel for yourself or for any other person from any “interested party” unless it has been approved in advance by the Agency Administrator in the form of a written letter to the interested party and the Agency’s designated Ethics Officer on a form AD-1101. This prohibition applies to all travel, whether in connection with official duty or otherwise. An exception is made for travel accomplished in accordance with a cooperative agreement.

Additionally, if you are not sure if there is a possible conflict of interest, you should contact your Human Resources Office to determine if it is a prohibitive source.

The Agency may consider accepting the payment of travel expenses from an outside source when a determination has been made that there is no conflict of interest, and a mutual benefit stands to be gained as a result of an employee’s participation in an event which is to be sponsored and funded by an outside source.

In the absence of a formal agreement, the acceptance of non-Federal funds must be documented through an exchange of official correspondence, i.e., a written offer from the non-Federal entity and the written acceptance of the non-Federal source’s offer by the Agency. The acceptance correspondence should identify and address the expenses that will be reimbursed by the non-Federal source and must be approved by the Administrator. In most cases, the acceptance correspondence and AD-202, Travel Authorization/Advance, should reflect expenditures limited to reasonable travel expenses, not in excess of those of which you would be entitled to if traveling at the expense of the Department.

The acceptance correspondence should advise the non-Federal entity that all payments should be made by check payable to the Agency.

SUBSISTENCE/TRANSPORTATION EXPENSES

Subsistence and transportation expenses in excess of regulatory limitations may not be authorized by the Agency or accepted from a non-federal source. Payment of these expenses are limited to normal and reasonable expenses, not in excess of those to which an employee would be entitled to if traveling at the expense of the Department, or the reimbursement by a non-Federal source. Accommodations above coach class, either paid by the agency or reimbursed to the Agency by the non-Federal source, must be approved

in advance by the Assistant Secretary, MRP (see July Issue of Travel Tidbits for information on requesting use of premium class travel). In kind subsistence and transportation expenses, i.e., lodging, meals, and/or tickets provided directly by a non-Federal source, are subject to the same requirements and limitations.

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